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About *The Rebel* magazine collection.

By Don Ray

This collection of the entire run of publisher Larry Flynt's *The Rebel, a newsweekly with a cause*, was his opportunity to stimulate his run for President of the United States in the 1984 election.

His outrageous campaign to unseat President Ronald Reagan fell apart even before the 1984 primaries. However, in late 1983 and early 1984, Flynt's outrageous campaign antics caught the attention of the national media.

In about September or October of 1983, I received a phone call from *The Rebel's* Executive Editor Jim Goode. I was working as an on-call newswriter for the CBS-owned television in Hollywood and was teaching a course on investigative journalism at UCLA at night.

"We're starting up an investigative news magazine," he told me, "and we're looking for contributors. I see that you're teaching investigative reporting. I thought maybe your students might have good stories to contribute."

"I'm not sure about my students, but I have stories that would work for you," I said.

Then he told me that Larry Flynt was the publisher, and he would pay good money for freelance stories.

That would be the beginning of about six unbelievable months on a rapid, outrageous roller coaster of madness — one that would take me twice across the United States alongside Flynt and his entourage of mostly high-profile rebels.

My first submission was about a religious group, The Black Hebrews, that was also involved in raising money by theft and fraud. Then, I wrote a hard-hitting story about how the U.S. military was illegally involved in videotape piracy at its overseas bases.

Everything went whacky when Jim Goode called me with an urgent message.

"Larry likes your writing and wants you to write a profile piece about him," he said. "You need to head straight to his mansion in Bel Air. He's throwing a big party, and he want you to interact with his guests."

I said I'd take the assignment, but only under the condition that, one, I must have unlimited access to Flynt, and two, nobody can edit anything I write — I get to write it as I see it."

Goode said he'd run it by Larry and get back to me.

Four minutes later, Jim Goode called me back.

"Larry says to tell you, 'I don't give a fuck about what you write, but you need to fly with me to Dallas and Washington D.C. first thing in the morning."

You can read about the unbelievable antic that would follow — just check out "The Flynt Papers" in Volume 2, Number 1.

The Rebel appeared to be selling full-page ads, but Jim Goode told that me Larry Flynt had instructed him to put in expensive-looking ads without even asking for any permission. I suspect they used ads that were also running in his *Hustler Magazine*.

Now, nearly 40 years later, I am astounded when I re-read the hard-hitting, in-depth stories that appeared back then. Many of them could be considered primers for the major stories that would only later reach the attention of the mainstream media.

If you're one of the many writers involved, I'd like to talk with you. I'd like to learn the impact your stories had on your career. Please tell me the significance of your investigative work back then. My email is donray@donray.com.

For those who are reading the magazine for the first time, I'd like to hear your thoughts and reactions as well.